

Goals/Objectives/Student Outcomes:

Students will:

- Work cooperatively with others having the same or similar topics.
- Interact with local individuals.
- Gain practice in life-long skills, including identifying a topic, identifying resources, reading critically, writing, discussing, speaking and debating.
- Identify the regiments that came from their county and city.
- Employ simple research strategies including but not limited to, identifying and narrowing topics, identifying resources, note-taking, critical reading skills, and outlining.
- Write a brief readable history of the local regiments that emphasizes their accomplishments.
- Identify local individuals who served and write a brief history of each or a generic history of the everyday life of a soldier.
- Write a brief history of local non-combatants, discussing their lives and problems.
- Research any dissenting points of view, including those of people who labeled themselves pro-South, copperhead, pacifist, or abolitionist.
- Role-play as a Civil War Soldier, mother, person of color, abolitionist, copperhead, etc.
- Conduct a successful panel discussion and debate.

Materials:

1. Original materials from local and county historical society collections
2. Other published sources (see Resources at end of lesson)
3. Data base on Macintosh disk available from Green Valley AEA

Background:

Although no Civil War battles were fought in Iowa, the war nevertheless had a profound effect upon the people of the state. At

least 72,000 Iowans, about one-half of all the eligible males between the ages of 15 and 40, served with the Union forces. This was the highest percentage of any state, North or South. Of the 21,501 Iowa casualties, more than 3,500 died from wounds inflicted in combat, while nearly 8,500 died of diseases such as typhoid fever and dysentery.

Tracing the battles where Iowans fought will take you away from the "showcase battles" of the Eastern theater to the Western campaigns and battles at Wilson's Creek and Pea Ridge, Fort Donelson, and especially the bloody battle of Shiloh. Here 11 Iowa regiments, 7 in combat for the first time, were engaged in desperate fighting. Five Iowa regiments in General Benjamin M. Prentiss' division fought along the sunken road at the "Hornet's Nest" for six hours. More than one-third of the Iowans engaged at Shiloh were casualties: 235 killed, 999 wounded, and 1,147 missing. Iowans also fought at Vicksburg, in the Atlanta campaign, and participated in Sherman's "March to the Sea" at Savannah. In their last battle, at Columbus, Georgia, on April 16, 1865 (eight days after Lee's surrender at Appomattox) six Iowans earned Congressional Medals of Honor.

However, the story extends beyond the soldiers in the field to the abolitionists, underground railroad conductors, copperhead politicians, and especially the women and children who continued life on the farms and in the stores while the men were away. Through diaries, long letters home, books written after the war, and published government records, the experiences of soldiers and noncombatants alike can be reconstructed. Grave markers of Union veterans can still be found in many Iowa cemeteries. Some of your students may have Civil War letters or diaries preserved by older relatives. Others may be held by local libraries or historical societies. Iowa in the Civil War offers great opportunities for family or local community history projects.

Procedure:

1. Review with the class the elements of successful research and suggest sources where resources might be obtained.
2. As a class, identify which regiments came from your county and city. The class can use the data base contained in the Macintosh disk from Green Valley AEA.
3. Divide into cooperative teams of four or more. Each team will consist of a soldier, historian(s), a non-combatant relative of an Iowa soldier, and a dissenter. The soldier, relative and dissenter will research and recreate a character—real or imagined—from the local

area. The historian(s) will research the army unit(s) that came from the area. Each team member will do individual research but will share information that can be useful to the others.

Each student will need to identify individual, school, local, AEA and county any other resources they can find outside the immediate area such as the state historical library, interlibrary loan, etc. It is recommended that this be treated more like homework than an in-class activity. Comparing notes and checking on each others' progress can be done in class. The members of each team will meet with their counterparts from other teams, for example, soldiers meet with other soldiers to compare notes and exchange information.

After a sufficient time to take advantage of the discoveries of others, each student will outline and write up what they have learned in the form of a fictitious diary.

4. Read, rewrite, and edit the draft fictitious diaries. When they are in a form that is acceptable to the student, students will read their diaries aloud to each other until everyone has read at least a part of the diary that he or she has written.

Selections from original diaries should be read aloud and compared with the diaries created by the students for similarities and differences. Remember, the original diaries differed from one another just as much as the original diaries will differ from the fictitious diaries created by the students. Some of the fictitious diaries may lend themselves to role-playing, readers' theater presentation, or actual dramatic presentation. Such adaptations can end the unit.

5. Discuss with students the roles of women and children on the home front. Ask questions such as:

- Why did some women disguise themselves as men and fight in the Civil War?
- What hardships did women face during the war?
- When a male Iowan went off to war how did the lives of women left behind change?
- A son and his mother are spending their last evening together before he joins his regiment. What advice does she give him?
- How did women and children contribute to the war effort?
- What services normally provided by women did men have to perform themselves when they were away from home.

Assessment of Outcomes:

The student papers, outlines, and bibliographies will be input onto computer disks and perhaps printed out for inclusion into the school library for use by future students. It should be offered to other interested groups such as local historical societies, museums, and libraries. The expertise might be shared with any interested community members.

Either in first person or in narrative form, each interest group (soldiers, relatives, etc.) comes back together and reports to the entire group what the students have learned in a panel format.

Students will engage in debates and group discussions other than the above.

Extensions and Adaptations:

Read and discuss the article about Annie Wittenmyer in the Civil War issue of *The Goldfinch*, pages 18-20.

Play the Civil War game in the Civil War issue of *The Goldfinch*, pages 16-17. Ask students to invent their own game by creating their own game board and questions.

Have students research music of the Civil War. Invite students to sing "Dixie" songs, African-American spirituals, and marching to battle songs, or to write a song about a Civil War event.

Paint or draw a Civil War scene. Make a board model of a battle, draw a series of war editorial cartoons.

Study the war's affect on water, trees, soil, and air.

Research farming and crops grown in North and South and how war affected agriculture.

Compare and contrast the climate and geology of the North and South.

Write a "what if the South would have won" story.

Research and writing topics: leaders, spies, war by water, war by land, music, famous onlookers, Underground Railroad, women in war, South before and after, North before and after, symbols, industry in North and South, and African-American regiments.

Resources:

Leland L. Sage. *A History of Iowa*. Ames: Iowa State University Press, 1974, pp. 150-170. A brief summary of Iowa in the Civil War in the standard state history; emphasizes political and military events.

Mildred Throne. "Iowans and the Civil War." *The Palimpsest* 40 (September 1959): 369-448. A concise summary of Iowa regiments and their participation in Civil War battles and campaigns.

"A Pretty Hard Business': The Civil War Diary of Philip H. Goode." *The Palimpsest* 72 (Summer 1991). A soldier from Glenwood, IA ponders death and duty in the spring of 1882 at Shiloh.

"My Dear Wife: A Soldier's Letters." *The Palimpsest* 72 (Summer 1991): 68-69. A candid account of Shiloh.

Bell I. Wiley, *The Life of Johnny Reb and The Life of Billy Yank*. Louisiana State University Press, 1978. Letter and diary accounts of the Civil War from the points of view of the common soldiers.

The Goldfinch 9 (November 1987): 10-25. Contains several articles on Iowans in the Civil War.

Dale C. Mayer. *Never Call Retreat*. Privately published, 1994. This 35-page pamphlet is a good source for everyday experiences of soldiers on the battlefield; available from Dale C. Mayer, 30 Greenview Circle, West Branch, Iowa 52358.

James I. Robertson, Jr. *Iowa in the Civil War: A Reference Guide*. Iowa City: State Historical Society of Iowa, 1961. A useful guide to older sources; topic headings include "Regimental Histories and Reminiscences" and "Southern and Copperhead Sentiment in Iowa."

Kenneth Lyftogt, ed. *Left for Dixie: The Civil War Diary of John Rath*. Parkersburg, Iowa: Mid-Prairie Books, 1991. A recently published example of an Iowa soldier's Civil War diary.

Steve Meyer. *Discovering Your Civil War Ancestry*. Privately published, 1993; *Iowans Called to Valor*. Privately published, 1993; *Iowa Valor*. Privately published, 1994. The first two books discuss how to trace one's Civil War ancestors and Iowa's entry into the Civil War. The third is a compilation of Iowans' Civil War combat experiences.

Glenda Riley. *Frontierswomen: The Iowa Experience*. Ames: Iowa State University Press, Ames, 1994. Chapter 5, "Women in Wartime," pp. 110-135, is a discussion of the significant contributions of Iowa women, both at home and at the front, during the Civil War.

Changed Families

by Sharon E. Wood

When Alvin Lacey joined the army, his wife Sarah bought nine cows. She was worried that Alvin's army pay would not be enough to support her and her three children. So she went into business. She milked the nine cows and made butter to sell. Butter was badly needed during the war years, so Sarah Lacey made enough money to provide for her family.

When the war was over, Alvin Lacey came home. He sold all but one of the cows. Sarah's butter business ended. She went back to doing the household and farm work she had done before the war.

Like many Iowa women, Sarah Lacey found that the war changed her life in surprising ways. She had new work and new responsibilities. All kinds of women—and children, too—learned to take the places of men who left.

Almost half the men in Iowa spent some time in the Union army. Many were farmers before the war. Some had worked as carpenters, or lawyers, or steamboat pilots. But they were also brothers, sons, husbands, and fathers. Most of them left behind families who loved and depended on them.

Men in the army were paid, but often the

This newspaper advertisement from the Prairie Farmer shows how easy the new sulky hay-rake could be used by women farmers.





Harpers' Monthly, 1861

This 1861 illustration shows how many women contributed to the Civil War effort by making bullets.

money was not enough to support a family. Sometimes money sent home got lost in the mail. When these things happened, families had to find other ways to get by.

More Women Enter Teaching

When Martha Searle's husband went to war, she took a job as a teacher to support herself and her baby. Other women did the same thing. Teaching was a common job for women, but even more women were needed during the war years because so many men quit their teaching jobs to join the army. Some women even got to be school principals for the first time.

Just as women entered teaching, more women took over running farms. Most families before the war lived on farms. In those days, almost every member of the family had a job to do on the farm. Before the war, women and older girls often operated the dairy and took care of the chickens,

gardens, and orchards. They also cooked and ran the household for both family members and hired help. Men and older boys worked in the fields and livestock barns and looked after the farm equipment. Younger girls and boys helped out where they were needed when they were not in school.

When the war broke out, many fathers, older sons, and hired hands left the farms to go to war. Often there were not enough men on the farms to do the work. When this happened, women and children learned to do the work people had thought only men should do.

Marjorie Ann Rogers and her husband farmed in Tama County. When Dr. Rogers left to serve as an army surgeon, Marjorie took over some of his tasks. When it was time to haul the harvest from the farm to market, Marjorie decided to do it herself.

She had never driven a team of horses pulling a

heavy wagon-full of produce before. Her neighbors doubted she could do it. They worried that the wagon might tip over, or that the horses would bolt and run away. But Marjorie knew the work had to be done, and there was no one else to do it. She got the wagon to market safely. And she proudly made the same trip again and again.

Driving a heavy market wagon was only one job a farm woman had to learn to do. Farm fields had to be plowed, cultivated, and harvested. These were all jobs young men usually did before the war. But with the young men gone, other family members took over. The crops were important not only to the farm family, but to the nation.

Some changes in farming during the Civil War made it easier for women and younger boys and girls to help out. New kinds of farming equipment made it possible to farm "sitting down." A plow or hay-rake called a **sulky** had a seat on it for the driver. Now the person plowing did not have to walk miles back and forth across the fields every day.

New kinds of horses were also brought into Iowa at this time. They were much, much bigger than the riding horses people use today. These horses were Shires and Clydesdales. They made using the new sulky plows and hay-rakes much easier and faster.

The new "sulkies" were easier to use than the old equipment. But driving the giant horses that pulled them still took courage and skill. On some farms, wives, daughters, and sons too young to go to war took over this task as well. One maker of sulky hay-rakes advertised his machine with a picture of a young lady at the seat. "My brother



If I cannot fight, I can
feed those who do.

has gone to the war," she says.

The *Prairie Farmer*, a newspaper for farmers, praised families for taking up the work left by men in the army. The boys who stayed behind to plow and plant, it said, deserved as much credit as the older "boys in blue" fighting far away. The families at home were doing the work of men, it said. "The nation owes them its sincere gratitude."

When the war was over, most of the "boys in blue" came back. Like Alvin Lacey, they took over the tasks they had left behind. Most of the changes brought by the war did not last. But the wives, sons, and daughters who had kept farms, schools, and businesses in Iowa took pride in what they had done. □



SHSI

Marion, IA
August 13th, 1862

How did the Civil War affect the average Iowa family? Letters are one of the best ways to see how people lived during this time. Harriet Jane Thompson and her husband Major William G. Thompson of Marion, Iowa, wrote letters to each other while Major Thompson served in the Twentieth Iowa Volunteer Infantry. When he left in 1862, Jane traveled to Pennsylvania to visit his family.

Read the excerpts from their letters and answer the questions.

Dear William

*. . . I felt very bad and lowly the day you left. I tried to control my feelings but I could not and I hope you will pardon me. I wished tonight that you was at home. I wonder how many times I will wish that between now and Spring. I am proud to think I have a Husband that wants to fight for his Country. . . .

They thrashed 12 bushels of our wheat this afternoon and would have finished it tomorrow had it not rained. But I must close. I want you to tell me when you get sick. Will you? Write soon and often as you can. Good night.

Jane

**The symbol . . . is called an ellipsis. It shows where a word or words has been left out of the original letter.*

Benton Barracks, MO
Sept 12th 1862

Dear Jane

Our Camp is in the out skirts of the city about 3 1/2 miles from the River. Horse cars run here every five minutes, but I have felt no inclination for going as I am ready for bed every night as soon as work is over. I have still the command of the [regiment]. . . .

I would like to send you [a] pair of contrabands [slaves], but I am not going up Home now or I certainly would have one at least with me. . . . The little fellows will get off their hats & plead like good fellows with me to take them along. . . . But I do not need them, consequently, I can not take them. But when I get ready to go home I shall take a bright lad Home with me & educate him if I can, & see what we can make of them. . . .

Yours

Wm G Thompson

Butler, PA
September 13th, 1862

My Dear William

. . . Yesterday there was an order in the paper from the Governor for 50,000 more men to protect the state and the company expect to go today. There are a great many in that you know. There will be no one left hardly. . . .

It was a great sacrifice to me and to you no doubt for you to leave home and its pleasures to fight for your country and I have not regretted that you went although I spend a great many lonely hours. . . .

Jane Thompson

Butler, PA
September 19th, 1862

Dearest William,

. . . They intend to send a box tomorrow to Harrisburg with lint and bandages for the wounded



William and Jane Thompson posed together for this photograph before he enlisted in the Union Army.

soldiers that are to be brought in from this last battle at Gettysburg, which I suppose you will hear about before this reaches you. . . .

Jennie Thompson

P.S. Send me a kiss, will you?

Camp Gad Fly, MO
Oct 11th 1862

My Dear Wife

We marched all day through a continual rain. I think it never slacked a minute during the day & at Night we



Major William G. Thompson in 1862 at St. Louis after his enlistment

reached this place, making about 13 miles during the day. The roads were in an awful condition & our Teams did not get into Camp until to night. So our men were without Tents & had to sleep last night out of Doors in the rain. . . .

I can not complain of our eatings. We have plenty. Soft & hard bread, meat salt & fresh, Honey occasionally & Molasses all the time, also Coffee & Tea. Butter is verry scarce. . . .

Yours

Wm G Thompson

McCandless, PA
October 23rd 1862

My dearest William,

I received your kind letter of the 11th last night after I had sent one to the office. I was very gladd indeed to hear of your continued health but I do not know how you escape getting cold for you are in the rain so much. . . . Oh, my dear William how I do wish you were here tonight. . . . Write soon and often, and remember your,

Jennie

P.S. I forgot to tell you they have been drafting here. There were three or four drafted out of Unionville but I cannot spell their names. One is the wagonmaker and one is the blacksmith. Thee people here are afraid there will be another draft before the war will close.



Fayetteville, Arkansas
Dec 10th 1862

My Dear Wife

. . . We have had a battle [the Battle of Prairie Grove]. God Knows what you may have suffered on my [account] by the conflicting rumors you may have heard & not Knowing what had been my fate . . . At every step we took, our brave lads fell wounded or Killed. . . . The [bullets] were coming & going so fast & thick, and my whole attention was on the enemy who were not Twenty yards from us. . . .

But Just at sundown & the [very] last round they shot at us . . . I was hit. . . . The Ball struck me in the side of the Hip & came out of my groin, Just roughing the bone & hurting the leaders & nerves so that I can not have the free use of my leg for some time.

Wm G Thompson

Marion, IA
December 16th, 1862

My dear William,

I have not received any letter yet from you since the battle . . . We cannot hear anything by telegraph for the government has the use of the wires now . . . Last Saturday I got a *Daily Davenport Gazette*. It was directed to Mrs. Major W.G. Thompson and was marked where it gave a full list of the wounded in that battle. . . . I hope to hear that your wound was slight and that you are recovering from it. Dear William, how I wish I could bear the pain for you . . .

From your wife,
Jane Thompson

Major Thompson finally came home to Marion in May of 1864 because of the after-effects of his injury at the Battle of Prairie Grove. There, 40 Iowans were wounded and nine lost their lives. □



Questions

1. How did Jane feel about her husband serving in the Civil War?
2. What were contrabands?
3. How did people at home contribute to the war effort?

Jane Parsons Thompson of Marion, Iowa

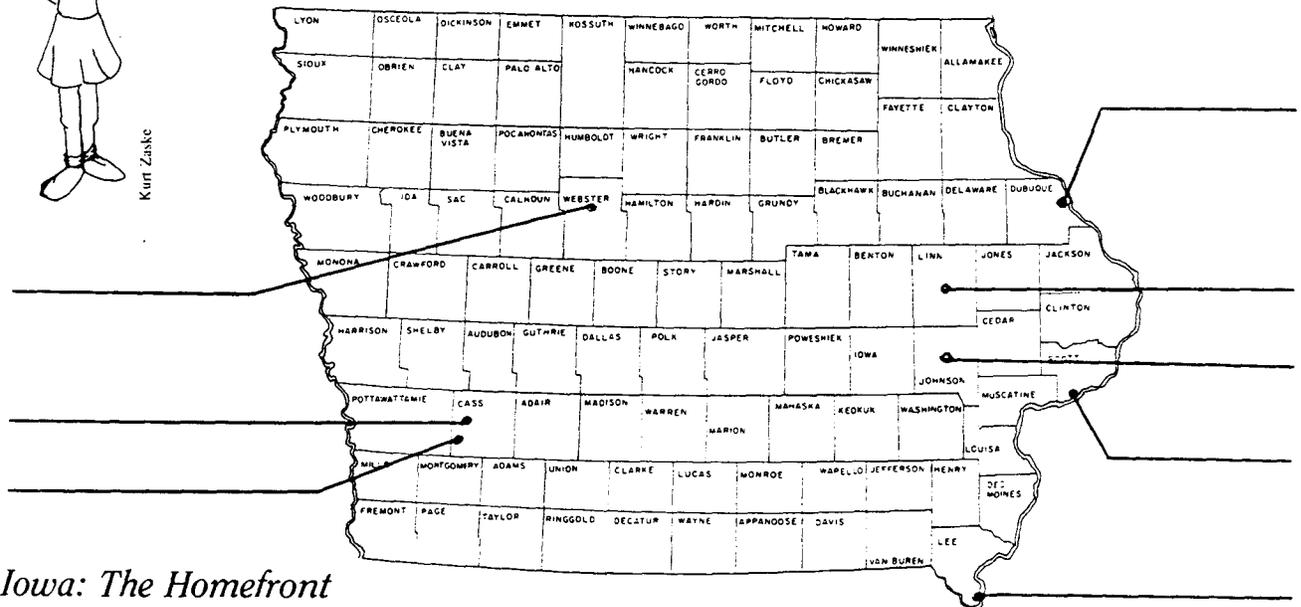


SFHSI



Wild Rosie's Map Page

Kurt Zaske



Iowa: The Homefront

When you think of the Civil War, do you think of guns and battles? There is a lot more to the story of the war than fighting. In this issue of the *Goldfinch* we're going to explore what was going on in Iowa during the Civil War.

We've marked a few towns on the map that are mentioned in this issue of the *Goldfinch*. Read the clues below and write the name of each town on the blanks above.

Davenport: Annie Wittenmyer opened a home for orphans in this Scott County town.

Dubuque: Dennis Mahony was arrested for writing articles opposing the Civil War. He was editor of the *Dubuque Herald*.

Fort Dodge: A young boy enlisted as a drummer in the Iowa Infantry in 1862 and was captured by Confederate troops. He tried to escape to return to

his Webster County home.

Griswold: Heather Shannon, a student at Griswold Community School, wrote about the Underground Railroad for this issue's History Makers.

Iowa City: The History Mystery photograph on the back cover is of a player from this university town in Johnson County.

Keokuk: During the Civil War, Annie Wittenmyer became a leader in the Soldiers' Aid Society in this southeastern Iowa town.

Lewis: Rev. George Hitchcock ran "the Lewis depot," part of the Underground Railroad, to help slaves enroute to Canada in this town near Griswold.

Marion: A woman from this Linn County town wrote letters to her husband while he fought for the Union during the Civil War.